

# TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SMALL CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON OUR PLANET!

## WHEN YOU THROW SOMETHING AWAY, WHERE DOES IT GO?



BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO

**YOU CAN** DRAMATICALLY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF TRASH THAT IS THROWN AWAY BY TAKING A FEW EASY STEPS:

**REDUCE** THE AMOUNT OF MATERIALS YOU USE, WHICH



**REDUCES** THE AMOUNT OF WASTE YOU CREATE.

**REUSE** MATERIALS WHEN POSSIBLE



**RECYCLE WHENEVER POSSIBLE**



YOU USE

AND THOSE

YOU THROW AWAY

**RETHINK** THE MATERIALS

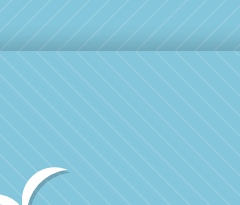
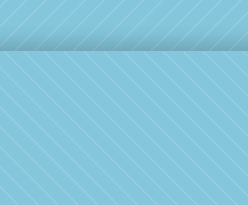
BY THINKING ABOUT WHAT WE'RE USING AND HOW TO REDUCE THE WASTE WE PRODUCE, WE CAN HELP CREATE A CLEANER, HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT.

## WHAT IS MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE (MSW)?

**OUR TRASH, OR MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE,** IS COMPRISED OF VARIOUS MATERIALS AMERICANS COMMONLY THROW AWAY AFTER BEING USED.



MSW **DOES NOT** INCLUDE INDUSTRIAL, HAZARDOUS, OR CONSTRUCTION WASTE.



## DID YOU KNOW?

MORE THAN **95% OF FOOD WASTE**

THAT COULD BE **COMPOSTED**

ENDS UP IN **LANDFILLS** AND INCINERATORS.



## THE IMPACT



RECYCLING HELPS TO CREATE **CLEANER LAND, AIR, AND WATER, AND BETTER HEALTH.**

IN 2012, **NATIONALLY,** WE RECYCLED

AND **COMPOSTED**

**87 MILLION TONS OF MSW.**

ANNUALLY, THIS ELIMINATED MORE THAN **168 MILLION METRIC TONS** OF CO<sub>2</sub> EQUIVALENT EMISSIONS REDUCED WHICH IS,

COMPARABLE TO REMOVING THE **ANNUAL EMISSIONS**

FROM OVER **33 MILLION** PASSENGER VEHICLES.

## RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING HELPS SAVE NATURAL RESOURCES.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING **87 MILLION TONS OF MSW...**

SAVED MORE THAN **1.1 QUADRILLION BTU OF ENERGY.**

THAT'S THE SAME AMOUNT

OF ENERGY CONSUMED BY ALMOST **10 MILLION U.S. HOUSEHOLDS** IN A YEAR.

**EVERY TON** OF PAPER RECYCLED

CAN SAVE THE ENERGY EQUIVALENT

OF **165 GALLONS** OF GASOLINE.

RECYCLING **1 TON** OF ALUMINUM CAN CONSERVES

OVER **153 MILLION BTUs,**

EQUIVALENT TO **26 BARRELS** OF OIL

OR **1,665 GALLONS** OF GASOLINE.

## OUR PROGRESS



OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES, THE **RECYCLING, COMPOSTING, AND DISPOSAL** OF MSW HAS CHANGED.

**4.38 LBS** IN 2012

**3.66 LBS** IN 1980

WHILE THE AMOUNT OF **MSW PRODUCED** WENT UP PER PERSON PER DAY, **RECYCLING HAS ALSO INCREASED.**

**<10%** IN 1980

**35%** IN 2012

IN 2012, OVER **19 MILLION TONS** OF YARD TRIMMINGS WERE COMPOSTED...



ALMOST **FIVE TIMES AS MUCH AS** IN 1990.



**1990**

FROM **145.3 MILLION**

TO **135 MILLION TONS**

**2012**

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF **MSW GOING TO LANDFILLS DROPPED**



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

### IN STORES:

- Shop for products **made with recycled materials.**
- Buy items with **less packaging.**
- Buy refillable, **reusable containers.**
- Bring **reusable cloth or canvas bags** to the grocery store.
- Buy only **what you need or what you know you will use** (applies to food as well).

### AT HOME:

- Use **energy-efficient light bulbs** and **rechargeable batteries.**
- **Reuse plastic bags.**
- Ask to **be removed from paper mailing lists.**
- Don't throw anything away that can be **reused or repaired.**
- For unwanted used electronics, **try upgrading the device to continue using it.** Otherwise, **donate or recycle it.**
- **Print on both sides of paper** (and use recycled paper).
- **Compost** your food scraps and yard waste.

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

If we all take **small steps every day** to reduce the amount of waste we produce, **we can help protect our planet** for generations to come.

For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/recycle](http://www.epa.gov/recycle).